

Love and Devotion for the Prophet

Allah Ta'ala describes the Holy Prophet (صَلَّى الله عليه و سَلَّمَ) as:

عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ○

It grieves him that you should receive any injury or difficulty. He is anxious over you. And for the Believers he is full of pity, kind and merciful. (Quran 9:128)

That was the noble soul sent as "mercy to all the creations". He spent his life calling the wandering people to the straight road and the deviants to the path of Guidance. And he faced countless trials and tribulations in this noble work. When he saw that his fellow humans for whose welfare he had sacrificed all his time and resources would not listen to him, he was naturally grieved. The grief was so intense that it could even bring his life to an end.

فَلَعَلَّكَ بَاجِعٌ نَفْسِكَ عَلَى آثَارِهِمْ إِنْ لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهَذَا الْحَدِيثِ أَسَفًا ○

Perhaps you would kill yourself in grief, over their footsteps, because they do not believe in the narrations of the Quran. (18:6)

Throughout his life, day and night, year after year, he went on calling the people to the path of success and glory. Many listened, some wise men believed, the fools rejected. But nothing could discourage him from his noble mission.

عن جابر رضي الله عنه، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم:

"مثلي و مثلكم كمثل رجل أوقد نارا، فجعل الجنادب والفراش يقعن فيها و هو يدبهن عنها. و أنا آخذ بحجزكم عن النار، و أنتم تفلتون من يدي" رواه مسلم.

I am to you like a man who lit a bon fire. The hoppers and moths began to fall into it while he tried in vain to keep them away. Similarly, I am holding you by your waists so that you do not fall into the fire (of the Hell). But (many of you) slip out of my hand. (Riyazus Saliheen, p.89, hadith 163)

Remember the congregation of the blessed Sahaba (Prophet's companions) where the Holy Prophet (صَلَّى الله عليه و سَلَّمَ) fondly remembers the coming generations of us Muslims. The Prophet (صَلَّى الله عليه و سَلَّمَ) describes them as the "people with the most wonderful faith".

عن عمرو بن شعيب عن أبيه عن جده، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: أيُّ الخلق أعجب إليكم إيماناً؟ قالوا: الملائكة. قال: وما لهم لا يؤمنون و هم عند ربهم؟ قالوا: فالنبيون. قال: وما لهم لا يؤمنون و الوحي ينزل عليهم؟ قالوا: فنحن. قال: وما لكم لا تؤمنون وأنا بين أظهركم؟ قال: فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: إن أعجب الخلق إيماناً لقوم يكونون من بعدي، يجدون صحفاً فيها كتاب يؤمنون بما فيها. رواه البيهقي في دلائل النبوة.

Once the Prophet (صَلَّى الله عليه و سَلَّمَ) asked: "The faith of which creature is most wonderful?"

"Angels," said the Sahaba. "Why should they not believe when they live close to their Lord?"

"Then, the prophets." "What is wonderful about their faith when the Divine revelation comes (directly) upon them?"

"Then, we." "What is special about your faith when I myself am amongst you?"

The holy Prophet then said: "The most wonderful faith is of the people who will come into existence after me. They will read the Scriptures (volumes of the Quran) and because of what is written in them they would believe (in Allah)." (Mishkat, p. 584, باب ثواب هذه الأمة)

The great concern of the Holy Prophet (صَلَّى الله عليه و سَلَّمَ) for us makes it obligatory upon each one of us to return his love in the same way. And no doubt he deserves to be loved the most: on account of his being the perfect human and the most bountiful for us. What he has given us is the Guidance to the Straight Path which ensures us bliss in our everlasting life. It is a fact that we would not have been a knowing, understanding and wise believer but for him. Thus our belief and faith itself remains incomplete without love for him.

عن أنس رضي الله عنه، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم:

لا يؤمن أحدكم حتى أكون أحب إليه من والده و ولده والناس أجمعين. متفق عليه. (مشكاة، ص 12)

For the people who lived in the blessed companionship of the holy Prophet (صَلَّى الله عليه و سَلَّمَ) and witnessed his noble conduct and unparalleled sacrifices, this love came naturally. This love was so intense that on this basis too, they were perfect Muslims. This love was also their most precious commodity for both

Visit

www.scribd.com/musarhad

for more articles on Islaam.

the lives. In spite of all the good deeds and steadfast worship that they did, they had one big worry: in the Hereafter, the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) would be holding a very high rank, so will they never be able to meet their beloved being? One of the Sahabas put this question directly before the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ):

عن ابن مسعود رضي الله عنه، قال: جاء رجل إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقال: يا رسول الله! كيف تقول في رجل أحب قوماً ولم يلحق بهم؟ فقال: المرء مع من أحب. متفق عليه. (مشكاة، ص 426)

A person came to the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and asked: What do you say about a person who loves some people but cannot reach them (his reference was to the Prophet himself: he loved the Prophet but could not get close to him with respect to the ranks in the Hereafter)? The Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) replied: (In the Hereafter) a person will be with the people he loved.

The Sahaba also knew that this love was a great blessing and had the potential to save them from all the torments of the Hereafter and take them to the Paradise. So at certain times, they would be longing for the Hereafter to come soon so that they could attain their goal: get to see Allah and be in the company of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

عن أنس رضي الله عنه، أن رجلاً قال: يا رسول الله! متى الساعة؟ قال: ويلك! وما أعددت لها؟ قال: ما أعددت لها إلا أني أحب الله ورسوله. أنت مع من أحببت. قال أنس: فما رأيت المسلمين فرحوا بشيء بعد الإسلام فرحهم بها. متفق عليه. (مشكاة، ص 426)

A person asked the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ): When will the Hereafter come? "Woe to you! What preparation have you done for that (day)?"

"I have done no preparation except that I love Allah and His Prophet," he replied. "You will be with him whom you loved," the Prophet remarked.

What the Sahabi (companion) had asked was not a personal question. He had only given expression to the feelings of the entire community of Sahaba. So the Prophet's complimentary remark *"You will be with him whom you loved"* applied equally to each of the Sahaba. Hazrat Anas, the narrator of this hadith, notices this effect of the Prophet's reply on the Sahaba:

"I didn't find the Muslims so pleased with anything after embracing Islam as they were with this remark."

Now we come to the million-dollar question: what this love exactly means? What are the consequences of this love in this world and the Hereafter? What is the exact effect of this love on the lover? Is it only reciting eulogies for the noble soul or is there something more to it? Let us try to find the answer from Hadith itself.

عن عبد الله بن مغفل رضي الله عنه، قال: جاء رجل إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقال: إني أحبك. قال: انظر ما تقول. فقال: والله إني لأحبك ثلاث مرات. قال: إن كنت صادقاً، فأعدّ للفقر تجفافاً، للفقر أسرع إلي من يحبني من السيل إلى منتهاه. رواه الترمذي. (مشكاة، ص 448)

A person met the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and told him: "I adore you." The Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) cautioned him: "Think again what you are saying." The Sahabi repeated his statement thrice.

The Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: If you are rally steadfast on your statement, then get ready with your armour to confront poverty. Poverty rushes faster towards my adorer than the flood-water does towards its end-point (down the slope).

The Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) has described the exact demands of love and adoration for him. According to a hadith in Sunan e Tirmizi, only the person who loves his customs and practices does in fact love him. A person who claims himself to be the lover and slave of the Prophet but has no regard for his traditions and is not keen to follow his practices is only making a hollow claim which will do him no good. On the other hand, a person whose love for the noble being (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) translates into a keenness to follow each and every practice of his is the true adorer of the Prophet and he alone deserves the sublime reward of being with the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) in the Hereafter.

عن أنس قال: قال لي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: يا بني! إن قدر أن تصبح وتمسي وليس في قلبك غش لأحد فافعل. ثم قال: يا بني! وذلك من سنتي، ومن أحب سنتي فقد أحبني، ومن أحبني كان معي في الجنة. رواه الترمذي (مشكاة، ص 30)

The holy Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said to Hazrat Anas (رضي الله عنه): "My son! If you can, then let every morning and evening come upon you with your heart completely clean of ill-will and deceit toward others." He further said: "My son! That's my practice (sunnat) and he who loves my practice does, in fact, love me. And whoever loves me will be with me in the Paradise."